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Message Text

SECRET

PAGE 01 CAIRO 07368 021052Z
ACTION SS-25

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 SSO-00 /026 W
----------021056Z 091951 /11
O R 021020Z MAY 77
FM AMEMBASSY CAIRO
TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 4544
INFO AMCONSUL ALEXANDRIA
AMEMASSY TRIPOLI

S E C R E T CAIRO 7368

EXDIS

EO 11652: GDS
TAGS: OCLR
SUBJ: JFK VISIT

REF STATE 98428,

1. SINCE REFTEL WAS ONLY MARKED "IMMEDIATE" IT WAS NOT PROCESSED UNDEREXISTING PROCEDURES UNTIL TODAY. JFK ARRIVED IN ALEXANDRIA THIS MORNING; HENCE, QUERIES CONTAINED PARA 4 REFTEL HAVE BECOME ESSENTIALLY ACADEMIC. NEVERTHELESS, THEY STILL WARRANT REPLIES.

2. WHILE I CANNOT BE SURE, I MUST ASSUME SADAT AND FAHMY WERE AWARE OF THE IMPENDING JFK VISIT. I DID NOT MENTION VISIT TO FAHMY, BUT WE RECEIVED DIP CLEARANCE FOR IT THROUGH MFA AND FAHMY'S MINISTRY TIGHTLY CENTRALIZED. GAMASY WAS ALSO ADVISED AND I WOULD IMAGINE THAT EITHER HE OR FAHMY APPRISED SADAT OF IT. IF EITHER SADAT OR FAHMY THOUGHT THE VISIT WOULD COMPLICATE GOE DIP AND INFORMATIONAL CAMPAIGN, THEY WOULD HAVE HAD NO HESITATION IN EITHER TURNING DOWN THE REQUEST FOR SUCH A VISIT OR ASKING THAT THE VISIT BE CANCELLED. BUT I THINK THE OPPOSITE IS THE CASE.

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3. SADAT AND FAHMY ARE LIKELY TO BE DELIGHTED AT THE JFK VISIT COMING AT THIS PARTICULAR TIME. ATHOUGH THE BASIC PURPOSE OF THE VISIT IS BADLY NNEDED LIBERTY FOR THE CREW, GOE WILL VIEW THE JFK'S PRESENCE AT THIS TIME AS A TIMELY REMINDER TO THE SOVIETS, LIBYA AND THE ARAB WORLD OF CONTINUING USG SUPPORT. SO WILL THE SOVIETS. EGYPTIANS ARE NOT LIKELY TO BE FAZED BY ANY QADHAFI OR SOVIET CHARGE THAT THE

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JFK VISIT INDICATES SADAT HAS PLACED HIMSELF UNDER USG
PROTECTION. NOR DO I BELIEVE OTHER ARAB STATES WILL DRAW THAT
CONCLUSION.

4. ALTHOUGH JFK VISIT IS NOW UNDERWAY, WE SHOULD BEAR IN
MIND THAT CURRENT PLANNING CALLS FOR US NAVAL VISITS TO
ALEXANDRIA ABOUT ONCE A MONTH THROUGHOUT THE REST OF THIS YEAR
AND THEREAFTER ABOUT ONCE EVERY SIX WEEKS (EIGHT PER YEAR).
THE NAVY BADLY NEEDS LIBERTY PORTS IN THE EASTERN MED, AND
I WOULD HOPE THAT WE WOULD NOT ALLOW EITHER EGYPTIAN/LIBYAN
TENSIONS OR SOVIET EFFORTS TO CAPITALIZE ON SUCH TENSIONS
TO DETER US FROM PROCEEDING WITH SUCH VISITS. CINCUSNAVEUR,
ADM BAGLEY, WOULD LIKE TO SEND TWO DESTROYERS DURING SUMMER
MONTHS, BUT I BELIEVE A SINGLE SHIP VISIT WOULD BE PREFERABLE
IN THIS PERIOD. THE SUMMER MONTHS ALWAYS SEE A VAST INCREASE
IN ALEXANDRIA'S POPULATION AS VACATIONERS GO THERE FOR THE
BEACHES. WHILE EVEN UNDER THOSE CIRCUMSTANCES, ALEXANDRIA
COULD ABSORB LIBERY FOR TWO SHIPS' CREWS VISITING SIMULTAN-
EOUSLY, IT DOES SEEM TO ME THAT CONTROL OF SHORE LAVE FOR CREW
MEMBERS MIGHT BECOME A LITTLE MORE DIFFICULT IN SUCH
AN OVERCRWODED CITY. HOWEVER, I HAVE AN OPENMIND ON THE SUBJECT
AND WILL WANT TO DISCUSS IT FURTHER WITH ADM BAGLEY.

5. THE POINT THAT WE OUGHT TO BEAR IN MIND IS THAT IF WE
BEGIN TO CANCELWHAT HAVE NOW BECOME REGULARIZED, ROUTINE
US NAVAL VISITS TO ALEXANDRIA, THE EGYPTIANS WILL QUICKLY
DRAW THE CONCUSION THAT WE ARE DOING SO BECAUSE OF CONCERN
ABOUT EGYPTIAN/LIBYAN TENSIONS AND SOVIET EFFORTS TO MUDDY
THE WATERS. SHOULD THEY EVER DRAW THAT CONCLUSION, IT WILL
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BE MUCH MORE DIFFICULT TO GET GOE TO REINSTATE PERMISSION
FOR US NAVAL VISITS AND WE WILL HAVE JEOPARDIZED AN IMPORTANT
US NAVAL ASSET IN THE EASTERN MED WHICH WE HAVE ONLY RECENTLY
MANAGED TO ARRANGE.
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